

A Benefit For You

BEST CARE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



EAP NOTES

Plan Early and Enjoy the Holiday Season

The traditional holiday season will soon be upon us. We may find ourselves caught up in a whirlwind of shopping, baking, decorating, entertaining and traveling. The holidays are a wonderful time to celebrate with friends and family.

Following is a list of suggestions for you and your family to review ***before*** the holidays so you can plan an enjoyable season:

- Set realistic goals for the holidays.
- Understand your limitations.
- Utilize your support network and ask for help when needed.
- Set priorities and resist feeling obligated.
- Allow yourself private time to recharge your emotional batteries and nurture yourself.
- Keep an eye on your expectations. Expecting fatigue, stress, and tension can guarantee them. Anticipate joy instead.
- Examine your holiday traditions. Compromise and/or discard those that have lost meaning. Create new traditions.
- Eat wholesome, well-balanced meals, drink lots of water and get plenty of rest.
- Plan a celebration day just for you. For that whole day, do only what you genuinely want to do.
- Delegate or discard chores that don't absolutely have to be done.
- Agree on spending limits with your family and friends and stick to that limit.
- Bake ahead of time and freeze.
- Consider pot lucks or holiday open houses as easy entertainment options.
- Schedule holiday activities on a master calendar so the whole family knows what to expect.
- Suggest that each family member "give up" a gift request and donate money or time to a needy family or charity. That's the true holiday spirit.

Avoiding the "Seven Pounds" of Holidays

The average American gains seven pounds between Thanksgiving and the New Year which takes an average of five weeks to lose. Below are guidelines to avoid excess holiday pounds.

1. *Get 30 minutes of brisk exercise daily to relieve stress and curb appetite.*
2. *Restrict or avoid alcoholic beverages.*
3. *Have taste-samplings or single helpings of your favorite foods. Remember to eat slowly and savor your food.*
4. *Chew gum during holiday cooking and baking.*
5. *Don't skip meals; it's hard to stay in control when you're hungry.*

If the holiday season becomes too stressful or overwhelming, contact your Best Care EAP. A professional counselor is available to help. For a confidential appointment please call (402) 354-8000 or (800) 666-8606.

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